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ABSTRACT

The problem of this conference panel was to develop means (strategies, materials, techniques) by which children of cultural and linguistic minority groups can learn to read and communicate effectively in English as well as in the language or dialect of their respective group. The six areas of approach, as outlined in this panel report, are: identification of characteristics of children from different cultural and linguistic groups that are related to their learning of reading and other communication skills; identification of teaching characteristics that are effective in teaching reading and communication skills to these children; investigation of learning environments--identification of characteristics consonant with the psychodynamics of these children; investigation of the effects of community (parents, peers, siblings, and members-at-large) attitudes, beliefs, and involvement on the learning of reading and communication skills in these children; identification of characteristics of instructional materials consonant with the learning and communication styles of these children; and identification of characteristics of appropriate techniques for assessment of reading, teaching strategies, learning environments and instructional materials. Lists of priorities and recommendations and of references are included. (JM)

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reading strategies for different cultural and linguistic groups

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CONFERENCE ON STUDIES IN READING

"It was unlawful, as well as unsafe, to teach a slave to read.

'It will forever unfit him to be a slave. He will at once become unmanageable and of no value to his master.'

These words sank deep into my heart. From that moment, I understood the pathway from slavery to freedom. Though conscious of the difficulty of learning without a teacher, I set out with high hope and fixed purpose, at whatever cost of trouble, to learn how to read."

Frederick Douglass

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July, 1975

NIE CONFERENCE ON STUDIES IN READING

PANEL 9

READING STRATEGIES FOR DIFFERENT CULTURAL AND LINGUISTIC GROUPS

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Develop means (strategies, materials, techniques, etc.) by which children of cultural and linguistic minority groups can learn to read and communicate effectively in English as well as in the language or dialect of their respective group.

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PANEL 9

READING STRATEGIES FOR DIFFERENT CULTURAL AND LINGUISTIC GROUPS

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PREFACE

The National Institute of Education (NIE) came into being during 1972. Its authorizing legislation requires the NIE to:

- Help solve or alleviate the problems of, and achieve the objectives of, American Education.
- Advance the practice of education as an art, science, and profession.
- Strengthen the scientific and technological foundations of education.
- Build an effective education research and development system.

In order to aid in meeting these general objectives, the National Council on Education Research (NIE's policymaking body) approved the creation of five priority programs in December, 1973. One of the priority programs was Essential Skills.* Its purpose was:

> To investigate through research and development, ways to aid all children to obtain skills essential for functioning adequately in school and society.

The initial focus of the Essential Skills Program was in the area of reading. Broad guidelines for an NIE effort in reading had been developed in a small conference held on Cape Cod during the late summer of 1973.** During 1974, the Essential Skills Program carried out an intensive effort designed to formulate more specific plans for funding research and development activities in reading. A variety of meetings were held with groups of teachers, school administrators, and scientists to designate directions for the program. The most ambitious of the meetings was held in Washington, D.C., in August, 1974, and directly involved over 175 individuals -- 50 as Conference participants and 125 as consultants to the Conference. This report is the product of one of the 10 panels of the August Conference.

The impetus for the Conference stemmed from a number of concerns about the state of Federal funding of research and development in education. Four concerns stood out in particular for reading.

1. Research in the field of reading was fragmented and noncumulative.

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*During the past few months, the Essential Skills Program has been renamed the Learning Division of the Basic Skills Group. Both the Basic Skills Group and the Learning Division continue to follow the guidelines set out by the National Council in December, 1973 (above).

**See Miller, George A. (ed.) Linguistic Communication: Perspective for Research, International Reading Association; Newark, Delaware, 1974, 45 pp.

2. The Federal Government was not making constructive use of the state of knowledge in the field in their decisions to fund new research and development.

3. There was a lack of positive and firm coordination between the Federal Government and the professional research and practitioner organizations around the country.

4. A large number of scientists in a variety of disciplines carry out research with relevance to reading. We considered it important to attract these scientists to work in the applied areas of educational research.

The Conference itself was a step in meeting these concerns. During the past year, the NIE has been developing plans for funding research and development in reading for the next two years. Suggestions from the Conference have played an important role in this process. But planning is an ongoing process and we hope by publishing and widely disseminating the reports from the Conference to stimulate discussion of the reports, of research and development in the field of reading, and, indirectly, of the plans of the Institute.

To some extent the format for the Conference was influenced by three other similar efforts of the Federal Government. In the area of health research, the conferences leading to the National Cancer Plan and the National Heart and Lung Institute Plan served as partial models. Within NIE, the Teaching Division had held a major planning effort in the area of teaching research during the early summer of 1974. The intent in each of these efforts was to develop a coherent set of documents that would be responsive to the needs of the American public and to knowledge in the field.

We felt it necessary to structure the Conference in two important ways. First, after extensive consultation with scientists and practitioners in the field we arrived at the conclusion that major efforts in the past had often ignored or down-played the critical importance of the stage of reading called "reading comprehension." Although we realized the impossibility of actually separating out "reading comprehension" from the earlier stage of learning to read -- which requires the learner to be able to translate written letters and words into speech -- our advice suggested that the comprehension or "reading for meaning" stage required far more attention than it had received in the past. Consequently, seven of the ten panels focused on problems in this area. Second, to direct the focus of the panels to planning future research we requested the panelists to organize their ideas into general approaches within the problem area, within the approaches to suggest programs for research, and, finally, when possible to specify particular research or development projects.

The seven panels addressing problems in comprehension spanned a wide range of concerns. The first three panels focused on basic research issues. Their panel reports are titled: Semantics, Concepts, and Culture; The Structure and Use of Language; and Attention and Motivation. The fourth panel was asked to consider the problem of Modeling the Reading Process. The fifth panel directed its attention to the issue of measuring how well people read and its report is titled Assessment of Reading Comprehension. The sixth and seventh reports directed themselves respectively at the practical problems of the Application of Existing Reading Comprehension Research and Reading Comprehension and the High School Graduate. The final three panels directed their attention to three pressing concerns in early reading: Learning and Motivation in Early Reading; Reading Strategies for Different Cultural and Linguistic Groups; and Essential Skills and Skill Hierarchies in Reading.

Although the reports have undergone some revision and editing since the Conference, the major part of the work was done in concentrated sessions in the space of a few days. The resulting documents are not polished or exhaustive. They are meant to be working documents to stimulate debate, suggestions, and comments. Such comments or requests for other reports should be directed to:

Director, Learning Division
National Institute of Education
Washington, D.C. 20208

The work of organizing the Conference was carried out by members of the Essential Skills staff at the NIE -- each of the panels had an NIE staff person as a permanent liaison. Special acknowledgments are due to Susan Duffy and Donald Fisher for their assistance in preparing the reports for publication and to Arthur Young & Company for coordination and arrangements before, during, and after the Conference. Finally, the work of NIE cannot proceed without the kind of skill, involvement, and hard work given by the panel chairpeople, panelists, and consultants for this Conference. The ideas and emphases in the reports are the products of their cumulative expertise.

Marshall S. Smith
Conference Chairperson

LIST OF PANEL REPORTS AND CHAIRPERSONS

1. Semantics, Concepts, and Culture, Dr. George Miller, Rockefeller University
2. The Structure and Use of Language, Dr. Thomas Trabasso, Princeton University
3. Attention and Motivation, Dr. Sheldon White, Harvard University
4. Modeling the Reading Process, Dr. Richard Venezky, Wisconsin University
5. Assessment of Reading Comprehension, Dr. Ernst Rothkopf, Bell Laboratories
6. Application of Existing Reading Comprehension Research, Dr. Lauren Resnick, University of Pittsburgh
7. Reading Comprehension and the High School Graduate, Dr. Mina Shaugnessy, City University of New York
8. Learning and Motivation in Early Reading, Dr. Richard Hodges, University of Chicago
9. Reading Strategies for Different Cultural and Linguistic Groups, Dr. Manuel Ramirez, University of California, Santa Cruz
10. Essential Skills and Skill Hierarchies in Reading, Dr. Irene Athey, University of Rochester

PANEL 9

READING STRATEGIES FOR DIFFERENT CULTURAL AND LINGUISTIC GROUPS

INTRODUCTION

The literature on reading is extensive and varied, but the greater part of it is concerned with technical aspects, such as sound/symbol relationships, eye movements, memory-span, etc., or with methodologies for reading programs. Until recently, at least, there has been less concern with the social, cultural, and linguistic background of children. For the most part, researchers once seemed to take this situation for granted, presumably assuming that the children's background would differ little from their own, or have little effect on learning to read. However, it has become clear that the high rate of failure among children of different cultural and linguistic groups has been caused by the failure of educators from the mainstream culture to understand the children's situation on entering school. The area of research discussed by Panel 9 consists of attempts to cure that ignorance and provide better learning environments for all children, especially those from different cultural and linguistic groups.

PROBLEM AREA DESCRIPTION

Problem Area Statement

The aim of Panel 9 is to determine how children from different cultural and linguistic groups can be given the best opportunities for developing reading skills.

The sociocultural system of such groups differs from that of the mainstream American middle class in language, attitudes, and values. The values of these groups are reflected in the teaching styles of parents, and these in turn result in learning, incentive-motivational, human relational, and communication styles characteristic of each group.

Schools have not generally been responsive to the unique psychodynamics of students from different cultural and linguistic groups and have usually attempted to force these students to conform to the mainstream sociocultural system. These attempts have resulted in value conflicts, anxiety, and frequent failure for these students.

Lesser, Fifer, and Clark (1965) and Stodolsky and Lesser (1967) have found that members of different ethnic groups exhibit different patterns of intellectual performance, each group achieving better in some areas than in others. These patterns were similar for children of different socioeconomic groups within the same cultural group. Lesser (1971) suggests that curriculum materials should be developed for each ethnic group consonant with the patterns of intellectual skills exhibited by its members.

Cohen (1969) has determined that most children who are members of cultural or linguistic groups tend to prefer a relational conceptual style, whereas most educational environments and assessment instruments are biased toward the analytical style. She supports changing educational environments to make them compatible with the relational conceptual style. Similarly, Ramirez and Castañeda (forthcoming) have found that most Mexican-American children are field-sensitive in cognitive styles, whereas most teachers tend to be field-independent. That is, whereas many Mexican-American children tend to be sensitive to social cues, to be cooperative, to prefer social rewards, and to learn by modeling, most teachers are task-oriented, give nonsocial rewards, and encourage individual competition and learning by discovery. Ramirez and Castañeda encourage matching teachers and students according to cognitive style, and, furthermore, emphasize the importance of training teachers to encourage the development of the unfamiliar cognitive style in students so that they become bicognitive.

The research programs advocated by this panel are intended to encourage American public education to be responsive to individual differences affecting the learning of reading and communication skills by children.

We wish to stress that the research methods are almost as important as the research itself. Too often in the past, different cultural and linguistic groups have been subjected to intrusive investigation by outsiders unresponsive to the cultural values of the group, and too unfamiliar with the environment to obtain meaningful results. We believe that some of this research has been offensive and, in some cases, pernicious. We accordingly recommend that, as much as possible, research on cultural and linguistic groups be carried out by scholars from the group being studied, and always with the approval and involvement of the local community. When the researchers do not belong to the particular group they propose to study, the research should be funded only if they can demonstrate to representatives of the community that they are responsive to the needs and sensitive to the values of that particular group. We believe it is necessary to insist on this requirement as a prior condition to the funding of research on cultural and linguistic groups, not only in fairness to the communities concerned, but also because we believe that it will result in more accurate, effective, and useful research.

Problem Area Potential

Work in this area has a high potential for success. Approaches and methodologies developed in the past few years provide an excellent basis for successful research designs. Many well-qualified researchers from different cultural and linguistic groups are now employed in higher education and their numbers are increasing. The communities themselves are responding positively to the opportunities provided by the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965. What needs to be done is reasonably clear. All that remains is to make the best use of our resources to meet these needs.

Division of the Problem Area

Because the problem area is so comprehensive, involving almost every aspect of reading research, there is some difficulty in limiting the scope of the investigation. We identified six areas of primary concern, but they are interrelated in such a way that, at times, the decision to include a program under one heading or another was extremely difficult. The six areas are:

(1) the characteristics of the child

(2) teaching

(3) learning environments

(4) the role of the community and the home

(5) instructional materials

(6) assessment

This report addresses each of the six areas as research approaches. The programs and projects suggested within each of the approaches represent the panel members' selections from a much larger universe of possible research efforts. A companion document contains the reports from the field consultants to the panel. Although many of the field consultants' ideas are represented in the panel report, we urge the reader to attend to the arguments and emphases in the companion document.

APPROACH 9.1

IDENTIFICATION OF CHARACTERISTICS OF CHILDREN FROM DIFFERENT CULTURAL AND LINGUISTIC GROUPS THAT ARE RELATED TO THEIR LEARNING OF READING AND OTHER COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Approach Statement

This approach is concerned with what we can discover about the children themselves and the effects of social, linguistic, and cultural background on acquisition of reading and communication skills.

Approach Potential

The research in this area has certain risks, because it attempts to find out more about children from a different cultural or linguistic group than is generally known about the children in the mainstream culture. It is, however, of the highest priority, because it is fundamental to most of the other approaches.

Approach Rationale

The rationale for this approach is more or less self-evident. It is obvious that the organization of curriculums, training of teachers, preparation of instructional materials, and development of assessment techniques requires accurate information about the children for whom they are designed. The research described in the following programs is designed to provide this information. At first glance, it may seem paradoxical that children from a different cultural or linguistic group should be subjects of a more careful and systematic investigation than has usually been carried out on the children in the mainstream American middle-class culture. The explanation lies in the character of the public educational system. Traditionally, the school system has been oriented toward mainstream middle-class values and has been staffed by teachers who share those values. However, as a group of sociologists (e.g., Garfinkel, 1967) recently pointed out, in our everyday dealings with people we take much for granted because we assume that those with whom we are in contact share certain background knowledge, perceptions, and attitudes. We usually do not need to spell out every detail of a request or agreement as if it were a legal document; we assume that "everybody knows" what we mean. Teachers have tended to assume that their requests and instructions, with all the nuances that are taken for

granted within the culture, will be readily understood. Unfortunately, children from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds have frequently suffered in the school system because of something which neither they nor their teachers realized was missing from their attempts at communication. Programs in this approach have been designed to remedy this state of affairs.

Division of the Approach

The approach is divided into four programs: social variables (9.1.1), cultural variables (9.1.2), linguistic variables (9.1.3), and physiological variables (9.1.4).

Although all four programs are interrelated and in some areas may overlap, each division represents an area of research which can be investigated separately.

Program 9.1.1. Investigation of Social Variables Which Affect Learning of Reading and Communication Skills in Children of Different Cultural and Linguistic Groups.

Program Statement

This program will research social variables (socioeconomic class, education of parents, family roles and relationships, characteristics of the community, migration, etc.) which affect learning of reading and communication skills.

Program Potential

This research is high-risk, but information in this area is critical to planning and implementation of experimental educational programs.

Program Research Considerations

Some research has been done in this area with several cultural and linguistic groups, but much of this information is misleading and incomplete. We should emphasize that the variables to be researched need to be defined from the perspective of the members of the groups in question.

Project 9.1.1.1: Relationship of Social Variables to the Development of Reading and Communication Skills in Children of Different Cultural and Linguistic Groups.

Project Statement

The aim of this project is to determine the relationship of social variables to the development of reading and communication skills in children. This project should be longitudinal.

Project Potential

The potential is good, although the research is expensive. Longitudinal studies are currently in disfavor, but we must emphasize that information like this for members of different cultural and linguistic groups is almost nonexistent.

Project Research Considerations

Rackley's paper (1974), written for this conference, emphasizes the importance of this type of research. Herold's (1974) and Cohen's (1974) papers also address the importance of social variables in the development of cognitive style. Cohen, for example, indicates that different types of family relationships contribute to the development of different cognitive styles.

Program 9.1.2: Investigation of Cultural Variables that Affect Learning of Reading and Communication Skills in Children of Different Cultural and Linguistic Groups.

Program Statement

This program will focus on variables which make up the sociocultural systems of different cultural and linguistic groups.

Program Potential

The research is difficult to do, but absolutely essential to the planning and implementation of experimental educational programs.

Program Research Considerations

While most of the research done on different cultural and linguistic groups has been in the area of values, it has been deceptive because much, if not all, of the information is inaccurate and outdated. The research has justifiably been criticized on the grounds that it has focused on atypical populations and that the investigators have been ethnocentric in interpreting the data. When one considers that most teacher training programs attempting to sensitize teachers to the values of Hispanic Americans use materials such as those mentioned above, one comes to appreciate the gravity of the problem.

Future research calls for projects undertaken by investigators familiar with the sociocultural system of the group(s) they are studying, and for use of approaches and techniques which abandon paper and pencil and impressionistic methods of data collection.

Project 9.1.2.1: Identification of the Sociocultural Premises of Different Cultural and Linguistic Groups in the United States with Special Attention to Identifying Intracultural Variation.

Project Statement

The aim of the project is to identify those beliefs (i.e., sociocultural premises) which structure the interaction of members within different cultural and linguistic groups in the United States with each other and with institutions in society. Special attention should focus on those sociocultural premises directly concerned with the learning of reading and communication skills.

Project Potential

The results will be very useful, although the research may be difficult to carry out well. (See Approach Potential.)

Project Research Considerations

Holtzman and Díaz-Guerrero (1975) have recently completed a major project which identifies sociocultural premises of Anglos in Texas and Mexicans in Mexico City. Triandis (1972) has also identified sociocultural premises of other groups in other countries. However, most of their research has utilized paper and pencil instruments. Future investigators in this area should be encouraged to use new approaches to data collection, such as ethnomethodology.

Project 9.1.2.2: Identification of the Relationship Between Sociocultural Premises and the Development of Cognitive Styles in Children of Different Cultural and Linguistic Groups.

Project Statement

The aim of the project is to identify those cultural values, attitudes, beliefs, socialization practices, and aspects of language related to the development of cognitive styles in children.

Project Potential

Although difficult research to carry out, the results will be very significant. (See Approach Potential.)

Project Research Considerations

Cohen (1969), Ramírez and Castañeda (forthcoming), and Ten Houten (1971), have conducted research on the relationship of sociocultural systems of several cultural groups (Blacks, Hispanic-Americans, Anglos, and Native Americans) to the development of cognitive styles of school children. There is need, however, for more intensive studies focusing on the development of cognitive style in individual children. As Herold (1974) has suggested in his position paper, there is also need to focus

on the development of cognitive flexibility in children. Is cognitive flexibility related to bilingualism and biculturalism, as the Peal and Lambert (1962) findings suggest? This area of research could lead to some of the greatest contributions of cultural pluralism to education as a whole.

Program 9.1.3: Investigation of Linguistic Variables that Affect Learning of Reading and Communication Skills in Children of Different Cultural and Linguistic Groups.

Program Statement

This program would investigate the linguistic variables that affect learning to read in English or in any language appropriate for the children to learn to read in. It would attempt to answer such questions as: What is the relationship between the children's own language and the variety of language in which they are being taught to read? What are the advantages or disadvantages for children, whose home language is not English, of being taught to read in their own language or in English first? What difference does it make if, as in the case of Asian Americans, their first language is written in a nonalphabetic system? Basic to all such questions, however, is an accurate description of the children's language, and therefore this program also includes provision for such research.

Program Potential

Because reading and language development are interdependent, this program necessarily involves the question of the children's total linguistic development. This consideration is important, not only for the initial stages of teaching reading, but also in the preparation and selection of suitable reading materials at more advanced levels. However, the linguistic information needed for the reading program will also be necessary for a coherent language development curriculum. Thus, the heavy investment this program requires will serve a purpose wider than that of reading alone. For example, reading and language arts materials are sometimes graded in terms of difficulty on the basis of the proportion of "hard words" in the text, but the definition of "hard words" is usually taken from frequency counts based on adult language usage, and, thus, may be totally inappropriate for any young child, particularly for the child of a different cultural or linguistic group. In her study of middle class Anglo-American children, Chomsky (1969) discovered that many of them, up to the age of 8 or 9, had problems with such apparently "easy words" as ask and tell. It was only by careful testing of children's comprehension of the uses of these words in context that the problem become apparent. If such a situation can pass undetected for so long in the majority language and culture, it is highly unlikely that teachers and curriculum writers will have a more accurate conception of the language of children from different cultural and linguistic groups. This program is, therefore, aimed at providing the

teacher and curriculum writer with accurate information about children's language as well as at investigating the linguistic variables which may affect the children's task of learning to read. It has, therefore, a high priority.

Program Research Considerations

Until recently, most linguists were either informally casual or introspectively subjective in the ways they collected their data. However, the work of Labov and his associates (Labov, 1966, 1972, Labov et al., 1968) has led to the development of more satisfactory techniques of studying language. While it would be unwise to claim that these techniques have now been perfected, there is at present a recognized approach to the study of language in its social context which permits the implementation of adequate research designs. Much of Labov's own work has dealt with the language of Black adolescents in New York City, but Fishman et al. (1968) used a similar approach as part of a study of a Puerto-Rican bilingual community in Jersey City. These studies provide (and already have provided) models for the study of language in other situations. However, it must be admitted that linguists (even sociolinguists) are seldom interested in the description of a language situation as an end in itself. There is a tendency to concentrate on those issues that are critical in linguistic theory; this tendency is reflected in the considerable attention devoted to phonological and syntactic features in contrast to the almost total neglect of vocabulary. As a result, the linguistic surveys of language that have been carried out recently have perhaps been less useful to the teacher and curriculum writer than they might have been if they had been planned with these needs in view. It is essential, therefore, that linguistic research funded for educational ends should be clearly designed to be relevant to those ends. Moreover, it is important that the techniques employed should be appropriate for the particular situation in which they are to be used. A cautionary example is given in Ward (1971) who found that the methods successfully employed by Roger Brown and his associates at Harvard for studying child language were totally useless in a rural Black community in Louisiana.

Division of the Program

Because this panel is concerned with all linguistically and culturally different groups in the United States, it is necessary for the projects to be carried out in each of the communities involved. For the linguistic variables, this means at least the following categories:

- Black Americans
- Native Americans
- Spanish-speaking Americans
- Asian-Americans
- Low-income Whites

- French-speaking Americans
- Hawaiians
- Portuguese Americans

Within each of these categories there will, of course be subdivisions. For example, the following groups are within the category of Spanish-speaking Americans: (a) Puerto Ricans, (b) Mexican Americans, and (c) Cubans.

For linguistic purposes, however, it may be necessary to deal with even more localized situations. For example, within the Mexican-American group, there are linguistic differences ranging from Texas to California and even within a State there may be differences between the Spanish spoken in "traditional" and that spoken in "atraditional" communities (Ramirez and Castañeda, forthcoming). There are parallel differences for most of the other linguistic categories. This situation does not mean that all linguistic research must be done on a narrowly localized basis, but there is a need for some linguistic research in a wide variety of local situations. Consequently, Project 9.1.3.1 is not a single project, but an outline for a series of projects. The other projects in this program are more limited in scope.

Project 9.1.3.1: Survey of Child Language in Community "A."

Project Statement

The aim of the survey is to collect information about the language used by children of elementary age in Community "A." By Community "A" we mean a cultural or linguistic group living in a particular geographic area (e.g. Black Americans in New York, Mexican Americans in Texas). The survey would provide evidence, for that particular segment of society, of the pronunciation, syntax, and vocabulary used by elementary school children. This information, in turn, would provide a basis for curriculum planning in the language arts and for the preparation and selection of reading materials.

Project Potential

This area is one in which there is no doubt about the value of the research. Any new, accurate information about the language of children from a different linguistic or cultural group is an immediate asset. As stated above (9.1.3 Program Potential), this information is crucial for the planning and development of language arts curriculums and materials and also for use in teacher training programs. It is also essential for the development of accurate language assessment instruments. In fact, it is probably not an exaggeration to state that objective evaluation of educational programs for children from different linguistic or cultural

groups will be impossible until a much more accurate description of the children's language is available than is the case at present.

Project Research Considerations

The most systematic study of this kind carried out so far is that by Labov et al. (1968) in their investigation of the speech of Black adolescents in New York City. Research on the present project should be based on the techniques developed in this study. The methods employed by Chomsky (1969) in her study of the syntactic knowledge of pre-adolescent children may also be useful. However, it will be necessary to develop further methods to investigate the vocabulary available to children of different ages. This research should not be restricted to studying the language the children use in speaking, but should also investigate the meanings lexical items and syntactic constructions have for children. The work of Piaget, Carol Chomsky, Eve Clark and others has revealed the extent to which children may confidently use language with meanings very different from adult usage. This research should use a wide variety of informal and formal elicitation techniques.

Project 9.1.3.2: The Effect of Differences Between the Children's Own Speech and the Variety of Language in Which They Are Being Taught to Read.

Project Statement

This project would investigate the relationship between children's speech and any difficulties they might encounter in learning to read materials written in the "standard" language. It would not be concerned with the cultural content of these materials, but with their linguistic form. Two aspects require separate investigation: (1) The relationship between children's pronunciation and the orthographic representation of the standard language, and (2) the differences between children's syntax and vocabulary and the forms found in the reading materials. The project would attempt to discover to what extent, if any, these factors affect children's difficulties in learning to read the standard language and whether reading materials written in a form more closely reflecting their own speech help to reduce these difficulties.

Project Potential

This area of research is legitimate but it may be difficult to develop adequate research designs; there are many possibly confounding factors. For these reasons, this project has the lowest priority of those in Program 9.1.3.

Project Research Considerations

This topic has usually been discussed in connection with Black children who speak a dialect usually labeled Nonstandard Black English (NSBE). Stewart (1969), Wolfram and Fasold (1969), and Baratz (1969) all advocate the use of reading materials in NSBE for teaching reading to Black children who speak NSBE. Bailey (1970), Melmed (1971), and Hoover and McNair (1969) oppose the use of such materials. Deslonde and Lewis (1974), in a paper prepared for this panel, gives examples of the opposition from Black community leaders to the use of NSBE materials. However, the question needs investigation on the linguistic level, not only with reference to speakers of NSBE, but also in connection with all children whose speech differs considerably from the standard language of the reading materials. In particular, it needs investigation with reference to the varieties of Spanish spoken in the U. S. and the written form of materials used for teaching Spanish-speaking children to read.

Project 9.1.3.3: The Effect of Teaching Bilingual Children to Read in Their Dominant Language First.

Project Statement

In many bilingual programs children are taught to read their home language first and then their second language. However, there is conflicting evidence on the appropriateness of this approach. For example Modiano (1966), in a study of Indian children in Chiapas, Mexico, found that those who were taught to read in their own language first, and then in Spanish, performed better on reading comprehension tests (3 years later) than those children who had been taught to read in Spanish, their second language. In contrast to these findings, Lambert and Tucker (1972) found that English-speaking children who were taught to read French and did not receive formal reading instruction in English were soon able to read in English as well as a control group who had been taught to read English. Engle (1973) summarizes a number of other relevant studies, but comes to the conclusion that considerably more research is needed before the contradictions can be resolved. The present project would address itself to the following questions: What effects does prior reading instruction in the first language have on learning to read in English? What is the optimal interval between learning to read in the first language and beginning reading instruction in English?

Project Potential

This area is one of considerable importance for bilingual education, and deserves a higher priority ranking than Project 9.1.3.2. Nevertheless, there are considerable methodological problems, and it may be difficult to develop satisfactory research designs.

Project Research Considerations

This research must be conducted separately for each linguistic group, since the relationship between the spoken and the written form varies from language to language. This is particularly obvious in the case of Asian Americans whose languages are written in nonalphabetic systems. However, it is possible that the major factor in learning to read any language is not mastering the alphabet principle or its equivalent, but grasping the notion that graphic symbols can represent language. If this assumption is correct, then there might be a considerable transfer of skills from the first language reading achievement to learning to read in English, even where the first language is written in a nonalphabetic system.

Program 9.1.4: Investigation of Variables Related to Hemispheric Dominance that Affect Learning of Reading and Communication Skills in Children of Different Cultural and Linguistic Groups.

Program Statement

This program focuses on the relationship of hemispheric dominance to the learning of reading and other communication skills by children of different cultural and linguistic groups.

Program Potential

The potential is outstanding; although the research suggested is high risk.

Program Research Consideration

Research on hemispheric dominance is currently attracting a good deal of attention (Orenstein, 1972, Gazzaniga and Sperry, 1967, and Ten Houten, 1971). This statement is particularly true for research relating sociocultural premises to hemispheric dominance.

Project 9.1.4.1: Identification of the Relationship Between Socialization Practices, Languages, and Other Sociocultural Variables, and Hemispheric Dominance.

Project Statement

The aim of the project is to identify those cultural variables related to left brain dominance and those related to right brain dominance.

Project Potential

This research is high risk because instruments for determination of hemispheric dominance are crude, but data could potentially be very valuable.

Project Research Consideration

Ten Houten has done some preliminary research in this area with Blacks, Native Americans, and Anglos. He and his colleagues have elaborated some interesting hypotheses, which merit testing, on the relationship of culture to development of right and left brain dominance. This research is closely related to that on cognitive style, because Ten Houten suggests that right brain dominance is associated with a preference for the field-sensitive cognitive style, whereas left brain dominance is associated with a preference for the field-independent style.

Project 9.1.4.2: Identification of the Relationship Between Hemispheric Dominance and Cognitive Styles and Learning of Reading and Communication Skills via Different Instructional Approaches.

Project Statement

The aim of the project is to match brain dominance and cognitive style to instructional approaches to determine effects on learning reading and communication skills.

Project Potential

This research is high risk because of difficulty in controlling variables and lack of sophistication in instruments for assessing hemispheric dominance.

Project Research Considerations

Although educators have been talking about brain dominance for a number of years, they have been largely unable to translate their discussion into meaningful educational terms. The key here may be cognitive style. If one conceives of teaching styles and curriculum materials as reflecting cognitive styles, and if there is a relationship between hemispheric dominance and cognitive style, then the findings of this project would be very meaningful in terms of educational change. For this reason, it might be profitable to carry out small-scale research projects observing children whose first language reading situations varied widely, learning to read English being their second literate skill. This type of cross-linguistic research might prove more fruitful than the intensive study of one particular linguistic situation.

APPROACH 9.2

IDENTIFICATION OF TEACHING CHARACTERISTICS THAT ARE EFFECTIVE IN TEACHING READING AND COMMUNICATION SKILLS TO CHILDREN OF DIFFERENT CULTURAL AND LINGUISTIC GROUPS

Approach Statement

This approach will encompass teaching strategies and characteristics of teacher training programs.

Approach Potential

The risks are considerable because methodology in this area is still evolving, but the potential contributions are great. Teacher training is probably the one factor which can contribute most to achievement of equal educational opportunity for members of different cultural and linguistic groups.

Approach Rationale

Many children of different cultural and linguistic groups have experienced failure in the schools because their human-relational, incentive-motivational, communication, and learning styles are unfamiliar to teachers. Teachers are thus unable to capitalize on the assets of these children. Nor are the teachers able to communicate effectively with the children and to establish interpersonal relationships with their parents, which would result in greater continuity between experiences of the home and those of the school.

The research of Keogh et al. (1972) and of Ramirez and Castañeda (forthcoming) is pertinent here.

Program 9.2.1: Investigation of Differences in Teaching Styles Among Teachers to Determine Their Relationship to the Learning of Reading and Communication Skills in Children of Different Cultural and Linguistic Groups.

Program Statement

The aim of the program is to identify those teaching strategies for teaching reading and communication skills which are most consonant with

the psychodynamics of children from different cultural and linguistic groups.

Program Potential

The potential is outstanding (See Approach Potential).

Program Research Considerations

Di Stefano (1970) found in his research that consideration of cognitive styles of students and teachers is critical to understanding the teaching process. Ramirez and his colleagues in the Follow Through Project at the University of California at Santa Cruz and Keogh and her colleagues at UCLA have been doing intensive studies of the effects on student academic achievement of matching teacher and student cognitive styles.

DeCharms (1973) and Stallings (1972) have been doing research which is helping to introduce greater sophistication to classroom research on teaching and learning. The instruments they have developed could be critical to this research program.

Project 9.2.1.1: Match Cognitive Styles of Teachers to Cognitive Styles of Students.

Project Statement

This project would investigate methods of matching cognitive styles of teachers (as reflected in teaching strategies) to cognitive styles of students and the effect of this matching on learning of reading and communication skills.

Project Potential

The value of this project could be great, but there is moderate risk because of the difficulty of controlling variables in classrooms.

Project Research Considerations

Research (Cohen, 1969, Ten Houten, 1971, and Ramirez and Castañeda, forthcoming) has shown that most children of different cultural and linguistic groups are either relational or field-sensitive in cognitive style. Research has also shown (Cohen 1969, Ramirez and Castañeda, forthcoming) that the quality of the interpersonal relationships that relational or field-sensitive children have with the teacher is critical to their academic success. Helping teachers understand linguistic and cognitive characteristics of children of different cultural and linguistic groups, then, should be of the highest priority.

Program 9.2.2: Investigation of Methods of Teacher Preparation with Respect to Linguistic Variables and Cognitive Styles.

Program Statement

This program will investigate methods of preparing teachers to teach children from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds. It will concentrate on the importance of understanding the linguistic situation and the cognitive learning styles of the children.

Program Potential

The results of this research will be useful not only in designing curriculums for teacher education programs, but also in inservice training. Because the teacher's ability is the key to the success of any educational program, this research should have high priority. Although past experience may not encourage optimism in this area, recent research is more directly useful to the teacher than was often the case in the past, and the chances of the program's being effective are accordingly higher.

Program Research Considerations

Many studies (e.g., Rosenthal and Jacobson, 1968) have shown the importance of the teacher's attitude to the pupil's progress, particularly in the case of language (Creber, 1972, Rosen and Rosen, 1973). Because most teachers are from the dominant culture, it is vital they be accurately informed about the children they are teaching.

Project 9.2.2.1: Investigation of Methods of Preparing Teachers for Linguistic Situation(s) They Will Encounter.

Project Statement

This project will investigate methods of preparing teachers to understand the linguistic situation of their pupils and the possibilities of confusion caused by linguistic differences.

Project Potential

This project could have a considerable impact on the educational situation. Although similar attempts do not encourage optimism about the success of this project, the investment of funds would be small in relation to the potential benefits. This is a high-risk venture.

Project Research Considerations

The history of previous attempts to apply results of theoretical linguistic research to the teaching of English and foreign languages

in the United States shows that they have been disastrously ineffective. (See O'Neil, 1968, for a criticism of one attempt to use transformational grammar as a basis for teaching English.) As a result, many teachers are skeptical about the usefulness of linguistics. However, much of the recent research in linguistics (e.g., Labov, 1972, Fishman et al. 1968, Macaulay and Trevalyan, 1973) is considerably more relevant to the teacher than ever was the case in the past. The research for this project would involve preparing and field-testing written and audiovisual materials designed to acquaint teachers with the findings of sociolinguistic research and to prepare them to deal with specific linguistic situations. An example of materials of this kind is a series of booklets prepared for the Open University in Britain.

Project 9.2.2.2: Investigation of Methods of Preparing Teachers to Deal with Different Learning and Teaching Styles.

Project Statement

This project will investigate methods of preparing teachers to identify the different learning styles of their pupils, to identify their own preferred teaching styles, and to find means of effectively matching their teaching styles to the preferred learning styles of students.

Project Potential

This project could have great impact on the educational situation with respect to achieving the goal of making teaching personnel sensitive to cultural differences. This project may also be an effective way of promoting attitude and behavioral change in teaching personnel while creating minimal defensiveness and negativism.

There is currently a good deal of interest in information pertaining to learning and teaching styles among the personnel of many school districts, so cooperation for a project of this nature might be easy to obtain.

Project Research Considerations

Although there has been much discussion in recent years relative to individualization of instruction in education, research shows that it has not been done effectively, and particularly not with children of different racial and ethnic groups. Recent research by Cohen (1969), Keogh et al. (1972), and Ramirez and Castañeda (forthcoming) has shown that the conceptual framework of cognitive styles may make it feasible for teachers to make instruction more consonant with the learning styles of their students.

Program 9.2.3: Investigation of Teacher Training Programs that Encourage Teachers to Consider the Sociocultural Systems and Cognitive Styles of Children and Parent Teaching Styles which These Children Have Experienced.

Program Statement

This program will investigate methods for training teachers to understand the sociocultural premises of different cultural and linguistic groups and also the teaching and learning styles of these groups.

Program Potential

The findings of this research will be used to develop curriculums for teacher training programs in cultural pluralism or bicultural and multicultural education, and also in inservice training. This program should have high priority. Some teachers hold negative stereotypes and do not understand the psychodynamics of children from different cultural and linguistic groups. It is a high-risk program however, because it does involve attitude change, and efforts in this area have been largely unsuccessful.

Program Research Considerations

There is little hard research in this area. The useful data that do exist have evolved mostly from Follow Through, Head Start, and Title VII programs.

Project 9.2.3.1: Evaluation of the Success of Teacher Training Programs Which Provide Training in the Cultural Heritage of Different Cultural Groups and in the Psychodynamics of Members of These Groups.

Project Statement

This project will compare progress of students in reading and communication skills in classrooms where teachers have been trained with different materials and approaches to understand the psychodynamics of these students as well as their culture and heritage. The primary objective is to identify the materials and procedures most effective in training teachers to teach reading and communication skills to children of different cultural and linguistic groups.

Project Potential

The research is high risk, but the contributions to meaningful educational change could be great.

Project Research Considerations

Project Follow Through, Head Start, and Title VIII have all done national evaluations which have identified individual projects most successful in this area. This information would be critical to this project. The University of New Mexico's Cultural Awareness Center and the Center for Cultural Diversity of California State University at San Diego have also been working in this area.

Program 9.2.4: Investigation of Teacher Characteristics Related to Effectiveness of Teaching Reading and Communication Skills to Children of Different Cultural and Linguistic Groups.

Program Statement

This program will seek to identify the characteristics of teachers who are most successful in teaching reading communication skills to children of different cultural and linguistic groups.

Program Potential

The potential and methodology are very good and there is a considerable amount of literature in this area.

Many sophisticated classroom observation instruments have been developed recently which could be used in this type of research.

Program Research Considerations

There is little information in this area with respect to teaching children of different cultural and linguistic groups. There is a considerable amount of literature, however, on the characteristics teachers should have for effectively teaching mainstream American middle class children.

Project 9.2.4.1: Identification of Teacher Characteristics Most Effective in Teaching Reading and Communication Skills to Children of Different Cultural and Linguistic Groups.

Project Statement

This project will identify characteristics of teachers (sex, age, ability to speak languages and/or dialects of students, familiarity with sociocultural systems of group or groups to which students belong, community in which reared, amount and type of training, attitudes toward cultural pluralism in education, cultural group membership, etc.) which are related to success in teaching reading and communication skills to children of different cultural and linguistic groups.

Project Potential

The potential of this project is great. It can make significant contributions in determining criteria for selection of teachers to work with children of different cultural and linguistic groups.

Project Research Considerations

O. J. Harvey has been doing research in this area and has developed a classification scheme based on behaviors and attitudes of teachers. Harvey has also been correlating teacher personality types and student perception. Undoubtedly there is much in this approach which will be helpful to the success of the project recommended here.

APPROACH 9.3

THE INVESTIGATION OF LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS--IDENTIFICATION OF CHARACTERISTICS CONSONANT WITH THE PSYCHODYNAMICS OF CHILDREN OF DIFFERENT CULTURAL AND LINGUISTIC GROUPS

Approach Statement

The aim of this approach is to determine which classroom arrangements, ethnic compositions of classrooms, and characteristics of schools' systems are more compatible with the incentive-motivational, human-relational, communication, and learning styles of children of different cultural and linguistic groups.

Approach Potential

This research is high risk, but the findings would be important for proper planning and implementation of experimental educational programs.

Approach Rationale

Although individualization of instruction has been considered important for several years, it has only been in the last 5 years that research has made it possible to individualize instruction according to students' cognitive styles. This situation allows the tailoring of environments in the classroom and the school at large to make them not only compatible with the cognitive styles of the students, but also useful in introducing students to unfamiliar cognitive styles.

It is also important to investigate the effects of ethnic homogeneity and heterogeneity in the classroom. Investigations of variables focusing on the enhancement of self-concept through ethnic pride are also relevant to this approach; successful programs (including those in private schools) exist for many children from different cultural and linguistic groups.

Program 9.3.1: Investigation of the Effects of Different Classroom Arrangements on the Learning of Reading and Communication Skills.

Program Statement

The purpose of this program is to determine which types of classroom arrangement (i.e. open or structured) are more compatible with the field-sensitive or relational teaching styles for reading and which are more complementary to the field-independent or analytic styles.

Program Potential

The potential is outstanding (See Approach Potential).

Program Research Considerations

Methodology for classroom research has become increasingly sophisticated in the past 2 years. There is also a vast array of curriculum materials available. Some research has also been done on peer instruction and cross-age teaching, and all of this data would be helpful in planning different types of learning activities and environments for this program.

Project 9.3.1.1: Comparison of the Effects of Different Learning Environments on the Learning of Reading.

Project Statement

This project should investigate the effects of "open," "structured," and "combination" classrooms (in which reading activities can take place either in learning centers, where students can work individually, or in areas where they can work with peers or with the teacher as a group) on the learning of reading and communication skills.

Project Potential

This research is high risk because of difficulty in controlling variables.

Project Research Considerations

Several researchers have found that children of different ethnic and racial groups exhibit cognitive styles unique to their groups. (Cohen, 1969; Ramirez and Price-Williams, 1974; Stodolsky and Lesser, 1967.) Systematic research is now necessary to determine the effectiveness of matching learning environments and learning situations to cognitive styles. Kagan and Madsen (1971) for example, have found that Mexican and Mexican-American children perform more effectively under cooperative rather than competitive conditions.

Project 9.3.1.2: Effects of Ethnically Homogeneous and Heterogeneous Classrooms on Learning of Reading and Communication Skills.

Project Statement

Ethnically homogeneous and heterogeneous schools will be identified in two different kinds of communities: those in which members of different ethnic groups have a strong identification with the sociocultural premises of their groups, and those in which members are less strongly identified with the values of their groups. This project will compare the progress of the children in reading and communication skills and identify variables most closely associated with success in the schools identified.

Project Potential

The potential is difficult to predict.

Project Research Considerations

The literature in this area is confusing. Research on Mexican Americans (Henderson and Merritt, 1969) seems to indicate that in some communities, children whose families have actively participated in both Anglo and Mexican cultures seem to have greater potential for success in school.

APPROACH 9.4

INVESTIGATION OF THE EFFECTS OF COMMUNITY (PARENTS, PEERS, SIBLINGS, AND MEMBERS-AT-LARGE) ATTITUDES, BELIEFS, AND INVOLVEMENT ON THE LEARNING OF READING AND COMMUNICATION SKILLS IN CHILDREN OF DIFFERENT CULTURAL AND LINGUISTIC GROUPS

Approach Statement

The basic assumption of this approach is that it is reasonable to expect that a group with a cultural and linguistic background different from that of the American mainstream will also have different attitudes toward and beliefs about school and all related activities. The thrust of the programs and projects under this approach is geared to an assessment of these variables as they are felt by most members of the community.

Approach Potential

Other approaches within the problem area concentrate on characteristics of the learner and the formal learning process. This approach intends to deal with variables related to the informal learning process. Because variables related to this area have been less researched, and consequently are less well understood, there is considerably more risk in this approach than in treading better-known paths. Nonetheless, it is this same feature that increases the need and desirability of research in the area.

Approach Rationale

Increasingly, theoreticians and practitioners have been accepting the idea that the discontinuity between the informal and the formal processes of learning reduces the effectiveness of the latter. Although the community, specifically the home, has been traditionally identified as a socialization agent and therefore participant in the teaching-learning process, the contribution made by each of the community's components to the acquisition of specific skills such as reading has not been well understood. This lack of knowledge becomes a crucial factor in the efforts to educate groups of children of different cultural or linguistic backgrounds.

Research findings (Coleman, 1966; Jencks et al., 1972) have clearly established that differences in achievement are less the result of characteristics of schools, of classrooms, and even of teachers, and more the outcome of family background. Particularly important are the characteristics that define the family in relation to its social context: the world of work, neighborhood, and community (Bronfenbrenner, 1974). It is, then, time to go beyond the artificial environment of the school setting to identify the characteristics of the learning milieu in which children spend a good deal of their time, such as the community and the home, and which transcends and modifies the formal learning situation of the school.

This approach suggests that the community's attitudes and beliefs should be examined as a whole, as well as those of some of its specific components (parents, siblings, and peers) that affect the learner more or less directly.

The examination of the variables within these settings has to be replicated with the various differing cultural and linguistic groups, as indicated previously in Program 9.1.3 of this Panel's report. The research designs also have to consider that each of the major ethnic or culturally different populations is in itself composed of subcultures or subgroups with varying characteristics and traits. For example, research with Puerto Rican populations (Steward, 1956) has long established the existence of distinct subcultures with different patterns of speech, attitudes, and behavior in general.

We recommend that, in choosing a methodology to study the variables suggested throughout this approach, one should give careful consideration to the use of naturalistic observations, participant-observer techniques, and other assessment tools that will maintain at a minimum the artificiality of the data-gathering process. As we repeatedly suggest throughout this report, closely linked to the selection of methodology is the choice of researchers and fieldworkers. Labov (1968) among others, has clearly documented the positive effects of using members of the same culture or linguistic group to gather and interpret the data. This experience should not be ignored.

Sharing with the community the observations and findings of the initial data gathering is, methodologically, a very powerful tool. Anthropologists have been quite successful in refining their findings when they "play back" to the participants the outcome of their observations. The feedback that is thus obtained is invaluable. It also helps restore confidence and credibility in the researchers' endeavors.

The net result of this approach should be, on the one hand, the acquisition of data that will facilitate the educator's task; and on the other, the development of links between the community and the researcher-educator. Researchers should accomplish the latter if the methodology they use, as suggested here, is one which does not further the alienation process. Finally, all projects hereby outlined should be considered as

specific instances of the research needed, and should be recognized as having to be duplicated with each of the groups and subgroups already identified by the panel, as well as with those groups that may be discovered in the process of implementing these ideas.

Division of the Approach

The programs in this approach are divided into three major areas. The first deals with the effects of community attitudes and beliefs toward school, school achievement, and learning of reading and communication skills. The other two programs are geared toward an understanding of parent involvement with schools; first is the attempt to establish how culturally and linguistically different groups perceive involvement, and second is an assessment of the effects of ongoing action projects.

Program 9.4.1: Identification of the Effects of Attitudes and Beliefs of the Culturally and Linguistically Different Communities Toward School and School Achievement; Specifically, the Learning of Reading and Communication Skills.

Program Statement

This program focuses on the community's perceptions of school and especially the activities related to the acquisition of reading. The goal is to research some of the basic elements upon which formal instruction in reading and communication skills may be built.

Program Potential

This area is the most crucial within the approach. Research has been lacking on the various groups identified by this panel. The suggested methodology has been tried with the study of other variables; thus, risk is reduced. Its results are basic to the development of present action programs.

Program Research Considerations

The school is both a social agent and a social product. As it exists in this country today, it is the product of a cultural tradition and of a class society. Not all societies or groups within a society deal with both formal and informal education the same way. It is clear that those groups within American society that have a cultural tradition and heritage different from that of the majority stand to have different outlooks and perspectives about the learning process and schooling. Hence, to back up any efforts aimed at the improvement of skills, such as reading, in culturally different groups, a point of departure should be the understandings and perceptions these groups have of the process of learning and schooling. Therefore, the projects within this program are designed to determine the attitudes and beliefs of the various culturally different groups with regard to school and its activities. If these are

different from those of the dominant culture, and there is reason to believe that there are differences, further investigation within the program should search for the possible relationships between these attitudes and achievement in reading.

Division of the Program

Because the chief aim of this task force is to advance reading skills, the focus of the research proposed in this program is on the attitudes and perceptions of the community toward language, both the vernacular and the second one to be acquired (Projects 1 thru 4). Nonetheless, the researcher should also obtain a general understanding of the community's feelings and values toward school (Project 5).

Project 9.4.1.1: Identification of the Attitudes and Perceptions of (a) Parents, (b) Significant (Influential) Members of the Community, and (c) Peers Toward the Learning of English.

Project Statement

The research will examine community attitudes and perceptions toward English, within the populations previously mentioned.

Project Potential

The learning of English in this country can be more than a linguistic problem. It is mostly a sociopolitical question, particularly with some of the Spanish-speaking populations, especially Puerto Ricans. Hence, the risk involved, more than methodological, is ideological, but the yield should be outstanding.

Project Research Considerations

Research with Puerto Ricans must take into consideration the population that lives within Puerto Rico as well as that which lives on the mainland. As part of the same project, the effects of their attitudes on the achievement and acquisition of English should also be examined.

For some of the groups English will become (inevitably) their first language; while for others (like the Puerto Ricans living in Puerto Rico) it will be learned as a second language and continue to be so.

Project 9.4.1.2: Identification of the Attitudes of the Culturally Different Groups Toward their "Vernacular" or "Group Dialect."

Project Statement

This project is the counterpart of the previous one (9.4.1.1). The concern here is for the attitudes toward the language learned and spoken at home.

Project Potential

The problems within this project are similar to those mentioned for the previous one. Programs have been formulated and implemented which have invariably assumed positive attitudes toward the spoken language, including dialects. Some of the difficulties encountered, for example in Black communities, may relate to unidentified attitudes as to when the use of the vernacular is considered proper. The yield should be substantial.

Project Research Considerations

There has been a tradition in this country to look down upon the use of different languages. It has in the past been a sign of inferiority or even lack of "citizenship." Thus, at this point, we should have a clear understanding of how members of the community feel about their own language. A second phase of this project should be the investigation of parental attitudes and preferences concerning the teaching of their children in the vernacular, dialect, or second language.

Project 9.4.1.3: Investigation of What Factors Contribute to the Maintenance or Loss of the "First" Language.

Project Statement

This project relates to the previous one. The concern here is with the exploration of the factors that may affect the maintenance or loss of the first language, once the second language is acquired.

Project Potential

This is one of the most sensitive areas, if true bilingualism or multilingualism is to be a reality. Many efforts lead from one form of monolingualism to another. Its results should be of central concern for many ongoing action programs.

Project Research Considerations

Many of the so-called bilingual programs have led only to the transformation of monolinguals in one language into monolinguals in another. There is a need to identify and understand the factors within the community, as well as the school, that hinder or facilitate the maintenance of the "original" languages.

Project 9.4.1.4: Investigation of the Attitudes of Parents Toward the Use of "Nonstandard" or "Nontraditional" Methods and Materials.

Project Statement

In an effort to cope with the obvious difficulties encountered in the teaching of culturally and linguistically different students, teachers have sometimes eagerly adopted "new" methods and materials. There is no evidence of the reactions of the communities of concern to this panel toward these decisions. Furthermore, there is lack of information on which methods and materials these groups consider acceptable and which they use in their informal teaching. Both areas should be explored.

Project Potential

The understanding of the community's methods of teaching should be most enlightening. This project also is related to the issue of "teaching styles," the subject of other projects within this report.

Project Research Considerations

This research should concentrate first in communities where "new" methods, approaches, and particularly new contents have been introduced. The choice of content is the type of decision that should involve the community; generally this has not been the case. Again, the discontinuity has been perpetuated, in both content and process. The decisions are still alien to the interests and expectations of the community.

Project 9.4.1.5: Identification of the Attitudes and Beliefs of Community Members Toward School, School Achievement, Learning, and Teachers.

Project Statement

This particular project will try to assess the attitudes and beliefs of several generations (elders, middle-aged, youth, and children) toward formal schooling as an institution, school achievement, the teaching-learning process, and teachers.

Project Potential

This information is very basic, but so far it tends to be neglected or taken for granted. The results of this piece of research should facilitate the formulation of programs well beyond those of reading.

Project Research Considerations

The statements made in the section on Approach Rationale are applicable to this project.

Program 9.4.2: Investigation of the Effects, Particularly on the Learning of Reading and Communication Skills, of the Attitudes and Beliefs of the Parents as to What the Nature of Their Involvement in Schools Should Be.

Program Statement

"Involvement with schools," as it has been traditionally defined and conceptualized by the American educational establishment, is again a cultural product. It implies a tradition, a set of expectations, and very specific behaviors. Not all communities, much less all cultures, see and define their relations to the social institution of schools in the same way. It is necessary, before further expansion of programs that encourage parent and community involvement with the schools, to obtain an adequate understanding of the attitudes of these groups toward involvement itself.

Program Potential

This information is basic, but it may be derived from previous projects. In terms of overall priorities, it does not rate among the highest.

Program Research Considerations

An illustration of the situation to be studied is the long history of "failure" with parent involvement within the Puerto Rican community in New York City. The superficial and culturally-biased interpretations in the past have led educators to assume that parents lack interest in the school and its activities. Others have gone so far as to suggest lack of cohesiveness and group affiliation on the part of this population. It has not been until recently, with the advent of Puerto Rican researchers sensitive to cultural nuances, that a more reasonable interpretation of the situation is emerging. The problem seems to have other explanations, such as the one that suggests that involvement may be seen and conceptualized in other forms. Research to substantiate this position is therefore needed.

Project 9.4.2.1: Investigation and Identification of Parental Perception, within Each of the Culturally Different Groups of What the Nature of Their Participation in Schools Should Be.

Project Statement

The main question this project asks is: What do parents perceive as their role in the formal learning process?

Project Potential

The potential is good (See Program Potential).

Project Research Considerations

Besides an examination of parents' perceptions previous to any formal involvement, parents' perceptions of the "participation" that so far has been "requested" or "forced" upon them should also be explored. Too much has been assumed, and the communities' own structures and resources very frequently are bypassed. The findings of this research should help shorten the distance that has existed between educators' expectations and community expectations and resources.

Project 9.4.2.2: Investigate, in Those Areas Where "Participation" Has Been Obtained, Its Possible Effects on the Achievement or Progress of Children, Particularly on the Acquisition of Reading Skills.

Project Statement

This project deals specifically with the possible effects of "forced participation" on the children's achievement in school, particularly in reading.

Project Potential

The potential is good (See Program Potential).

Project Research Considerations

There should be an assessment of (a) methods of selecting parents (where this selection takes place); (b) methods used to elicit involvement and the effectiveness of these methods in terms of the achievement of the children; (c) community perception of the effectiveness of the involvement; and (d) the effectiveness of any sharing of responsibility that may have taken place, by both measures of achievement (outcomes) and community perceptions.

Program 9.4.3: Investigation of the Effects of Programs Which Have Made Use of Parents, Peers, Siblings, Tutors, or Any Other Community Resource Other Than Regular Teachers for the Teaching of Reading.

Program Statement

This is primarily research geared to the evaluation of an already existing practice which seems to be in a process of expansion. The initial stage of the study should be an inventory of existing programs that make use of these types of resources. The inventory should also include the evaluation of the programs.

Program Potential

This research is needed badly, considering the present trends. It should help orient present developments.

Program Research Considerations

During the past few years, persons other than teachers have been recruited as either paid volunteers, paid paraprofessionals, or simply volunteers to help in various facets of the teaching of communication skills. Evidence in the form of program evaluation has been accumulated. The general tone has been positive. Nonetheless, not all culturally or linguistically different groups have participated in this type of experience. It is suggested that an inventory of such programs be made, with followup evaluations of their effectiveness in facilitating the learning process, particularly of reading skills.

Project 9.4.3.1: Investigation of the Effects of Programs such as "Parenting," Home Instruction, and Others Upon Acquisition of Reading Skills.

Project Statement

This project deals with the effects of programs in which parents and others in the home share with the teachers in the formal educational process.

Project Potential

This project should be of considerable practical value.

Project Research Considerations

There are three main questions in this project: How successful have these programs been? What are the conditions under which they are successful? Which features have proved to be less successful?

Project 9.4.3.2: Investigate the Effects of Tutors, Peers, Siblings, or Older Students on the Development of Reading Skills.

Project Statement

The aim of this project is to assess the effects of tutoring by other youngsters on the development of reading and communication skills.

Project Potential

Evidence is beginning to accumulate in this area, but a systematic survey of ongoing projects results is lacking. There is also a need for

more information on the specific circumstances under which the tutoring is most successful.

Project Research Considerations

The crux of the project is the determination of the conditions under which the programs have worked out with the greatest yield.

APPROACH 9.5

IDENTIFICATION OF CHARACTERISTICS OF INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS CONSONANT WITH THE LEARNING, INCENTIVE-MOTIVATIONAL, HUMAN-RELATIONAL, AND COMMUNICATION STYLES OF CHILDREN FROM DIFFERENT CULTURAL AND LINGUISTIC GROUPS

Approach Statement and Potential

Instructional materials are crucially important to the educational process. It should be obvious that materials containing stereotypes of different cultural and linguistic groups or excluding them altogether, could vitiate the effects of the previously described approaches. Instructional materials are also important because of the effects their content could have on the students' motivation to read. We need to discover how best to match the characteristics of the instructional materials to the strengths of children from different cultural and linguistic groups. This approach is an important aspect of the research on reading.

Approach Rationale

Research suggests that the historical and cultural content of material may influence students' motivation to read, especially if the material is relevant to their culture. Materials also affect students' self-concepts as well as their concepts of their cultural group, especially if the culture of the students is excluded from the material, or portrayed negatively, or if the culturally relevant material is of poor technical, artistic, or literary quality.

Research also suggests that materials congruent with the values of the culture (e.g. preferred learning style, emphasis on cooperation or competition) are more effective vehicles of instruction than those that are alien to the values of the culture.

Program 9.5.1: Determination of the Effectiveness of Existing Instructional Materials with Children from Different Backgrounds.

Program Statement

The aim of this program is to review existing instructional materials to determine their effectiveness in teaching reading and communication skills to children of different cultural and linguistic groups.

Program Potential

Researchers usually assume that materials and approaches effective for children of the dominant culture are also effective for all other children. This assumption has recently been seriously questioned. This program will encourage examination of this assumption by investigating the effectiveness of existing materials and approaches for each linguistic and cultural group. This step is a necessary preliminary to developing new instructional materials, and it can be extremely significant through emphasizing the weaknesses of the existing materials.

Program Research Considerations

New guidelines will need to be developed to review the existing instructional materials. These guidelines must examine variables such as the learning, incentive-motivational, human-relational, and communication styles reflected by the materials and the artistic styles of illustration. We must develop new conceptual approaches, methodologies, and assessment techniques to examine these variables.

Project 9.5.1.1: Investigate the Effects of Language Style in Instructional Materials.

Project Statement

The aim of this project is to examine the effects of the language style of instructional materials.

Project Potential

It is important to examine the language style of materials to assess their congruence with the language style of the culture. (See discussion in 9.1.3.2.)

Project Research Considerations

There is research that suggests that different cultural groups have different uses of language and use different styles of speaking. These uses and styles vary among such dimensions as the purpose of speaking, vocabulary, phraseology, speaking rhythms, use of exaggeration, etc.

This research will involve two interrelated efforts: (1) study of the language style of students from different cultures, and (2) study of the language style of the existing instructional materials and those that are being developed.

Project 9.5.1.2: Investigate the Effects of the Learning Style Reflected in Instructional Materials.

Project Statement

The aim of this project is to examine the learning style reflected in instructional materials.

Project Potential

This research is important because of the need for congruence between the teaching style of the materials and the learning style of the students. It is crucial to the development of effective instructional materials.

Project Research Considerations

There is research that suggests that different groups have different learning styles. These styles probably do not differ in one dimension, but may vary among a limited number of dimensions (maybe impulsive--reflective, inductive--deductive, field-independent--field-sensitive, for example). These styles may also show viability within each cultural group, depending on the geographical area, economic status, age, and/or sex of the students, urban or rural residence, etc.

Program 9.5.2: Investigation of the Effects of the Cultural Content of Instructional Materials on Children from Different Backgrounds.

Program Statement

The aim of this program is to investigate the effects of the cultural content of instructional materials on the learning of reading and communication skills by students of different cultural and linguistic groups.

Program Potential

This program is extremely important because there is research that suggests that material with relevant cultural content is a more effective instructional vehicle than traditional materials. However, the research is not conclusive. Research efforts in this area present few difficulties and potentially great rewards in terms of the students' motivation, self-concept, concept of their cultural group, and reading ability. This research could also be an aid to increasing the use of these materials in schools and educational programs.

Program Research Considerations

It is almost certain that new assessment techniques and/or instruments will have to be developed to assess the effects of these materials. The

variables that we should assess include not only the ability to read, but also the students' self-concepts, their image of their cultural groups, their attitudes toward their languages or dialects, etc.

Division of the Program

The following projects were selected, based on the conviction that the students must have a positive self-concept, and that we must be totally committed to developing high quality materials with appropriate cultural content.

Project 9.5.2.1: Guidelines for Assessing the Cultural Content of Materials.

Project Statement

The purpose of this project is to develop guidelines for assessing the cultural content of materials.

Project Potential

It is imperative that the cultural content of materials be assessed in a comprehensive and consistent manner. For this reason, developing guidelines for this assessment should be one of our highest priorities.

Project Research Considerations

There have been several independent examinations of the cultural content of various materials. The guidelines that these researchers used should be reviewed, coordinated, systematized, and extended. Separate guidelines that reflect the culture and history of each group should be developed. These guidelines should then be coordinated in order to be most efficient for examining materials that relate to more than one group.

Project 9.5.2.2: Examination of Existing Instructional Materials Which Have Cultural Content.

Project Statement

The purpose of this project is to examine existing materials which have cultural content.

Project Potential

We should examine the existing materials with cultural content to assess their strong points and accuracies as well as their weak points and inaccuracies. This examination is fundamental to the development of

new materials, the revision of existing materials, and the specification of major sources of errors and misrepresentations.

Project Research Considerations

There have been several independent examinations of individual books or series of books to assess their depiction of one or several different cultural groups. But these preliminary and limited efforts need to be coordinated, systematized, and extended to include an examination of the most commonly used materials and their portrayal (or lack of it) of all the nation's cultural groups.

Project 9.5.2.3: Development or Revision of Materials with Cultural Content.

Project Statement

The aim of this project is to develop and/or revise instructional materials with cultural content.

Project Potential

There is a need for new materials that accurately reflect the culture of students from differing backgrounds. Such materials can affect the attitudes of an extremely large number of students both within and outside of the specific culture the materials describe.

Project Research Considerations

Because some people are already developing materials with cultural content, we should encounter few new problems. However, the problems we do encounter will probably concern the accuracy of the portrayal of the characteristics of different cultural groups.

Program 9.5.3: Investigation of the Effects of Instructional Material Used in the Home.

Program Statement

The purpose of this program is to investigate the effects of instructional materials used in the home.

Program Potential

This program, although important, is probably less significant than the previously examined programs, because we have less information on the use of materials in the home. Nevertheless, this area merits study because these materials are usually used without professional guidance.

Program Research Considerations

This program can use the same assessment techniques developed in the previously mentioned programs. This program will probably encounter more difficulty in assessing the effects of the materials, because it will be almost impossible to control other variables that may influence the study.

Division of the Program

The following projects were selected based on whether the use of the material was part of a program or whether the materials were used informally.

Project 9.5.3.1: Examine the Effects of Instructional Materials Used in the Home as Part of a Structured or Formal Program.

Project Statement and Potential

We have usually examined home instructional projects with respect to the procedures used, but not with respect to the materials used. The need to fill this gap is great, and the value of this project is significant.

Project Research Considerations

Because Programs 9.5.1 and 9.5.2 should develop the guidelines for examining instructional materials and their effects, this project should require little additional effort toward developing a conceptual framework. But there will be some problems because of the variety of home instructional programs, the amount of time spent in the program, the instruction of parents, etc.

Project 9.5.3.2: Examine the Effects of Instructional Materials Used in the Home on an Informal or Unstructured Basis.

Project Statement and Potential

This project is designed to examine the effects of materials used informally, such as library books and books purchased individually by parents. Because parents and researchers are concerned about the effects of reading materials in the home, this project can be of great use, especially if we can disseminate the results to parents and the public.

Project Research Considerations

This project will probably be one of the hardest ones to research because of the many variables that will probably be impossible to control.

It might be necessary to develop new techniques or use standardized situations to gain initial data and then attempt to apply these data to real-life situations.

APPROACH 9.6

IDENTIFICATION OF THOSE CHARACTERISTICS OF ASSESSMENT INSTRUMENTS, TECHNIQUES, AND MATERIALS NECESSARY FOR THE EFFECTIVE ASSESSMENT OF READING AND COMMUNICATION SKILLS OF CHILDREN FROM DIFFERENT CULTURAL AND LINGUISTIC GROUPS AND FOR THE ASSESSMENT OF TEACHING STRATEGIES, LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS, AND INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS FOR CULTURALLY AND LINGUISTICALLY DIFFERENT CHILDREN

Approach Statement

Assessment, as used in the context of Approach 9.6, implies assessment in several and varied forms. We should disregard the traditional forms of assessment instruments and the implications of their use. The focus, instead, should be twofold: (1) on using existing materials appropriate for use with culturally and linguistically different children, and (2) on developing new forms of assessment which would accurately gage reading abilities, needs, and appropriateness of materials to be used with children from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

Approach Potential

Assessment is an integral and necessary part of any scientific investigation. The problem area and approaches Panel 9 has delineated necessitate that appropriate assessment instruments and materials be identified, isolated, and/or developed. This development is crucial to the overall and particular research efforts of this panel. Accordingly, we should give high priority to this approach. The advantages of this type of research are great, because we can use existing materials as well as the research base which has been long-established. Instituting this approach would serve as a basis for further and ongoing research and, at the same time, produce immediate rewards in the form of valuable assessment procedures and data.

Approach Rationale

Research by Darcy (1953, 1963), Jensen (1961), Ramirez and Gonzalez (1973), and others, has shown that traditional forms of testing and assessment (i.e. achievement, I.Q., and reading tests) have been detrimental to children from different cultural and linguistic groups. Most standard tests and other forms of assessment presently in use in the

schools are inappropriate for use with children who do not belong to the American middle class mainstream. Although the use of assessment instruments has become institutionalized in this country, a critical appraisal of most assessment instruments would reveal that they are inappropriate for the following reasons:

(1) Most assessment instruments have not been standardized (normed), validated, or designed for use with children from any cultural and linguistic group other than the American mainstream.

(2) Traditional tests and materials employ inappropriate language. Normally, the language is either foreign to the child or is a type of English unfamiliar to children from different cultural and linguistic groups.

(3) The content of such materials is usually very ethnocentric and culture-bound to that group for which it was developed, in this case, the American middle class child of the last few decades. Material oftentimes has no relevance socially, culturally, or psychologically for children of different cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Foreign language translations of American tests are also inappropriate because the content is still culture-bound, even though presented in language comprehensible to the child.

(4) Last, and perhaps most important, is the testing situation itself. For children of different cultural and linguistic backgrounds, the idea of testing is often both physically and psychologically frightening. Children from these groups are very often not prepared (because of differences in culture and value systems) to be able to perform, and in some instances even to cope with the traditional testing situation. For example, to perform on a test of achievement in front of an examiner of a different background and primary language can be extremely detrimental to a culturally or linguistically different child. This situation may, in extreme cases, cause severe emotional disturbances and hinder a healthy development.

Given that the use and misuse of assessment instruments has been and continues to be detrimental and of little real value for the assessment of children of different cultural and linguistic backgrounds, the panel suggests that an alternative is to identify those culturally and linguistically appropriate assessment instruments that exist, and/or to develop new and appropriately designed instruments in the areas where they are necessary.

We must point out, however, that as we indicated in the Approach Statement, the panel wishes to consider the role assessment is to play in research and education in general. In this panel's view, the central issue is whether assessment should be used to categorize deficiencies,

failures, and faults or whether assessment should emphasize the gathering of data and knowledge about groups, individuals, and behavior which can be used for descriptive and prescriptive purposes. The panel feels that the latter should be the role of assessment as it relates to children from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Moreover, assessment is to be used to comprehend and gain knowledge about areas not usually subsumed under the heading of assessment. For example, assessment of teaching methods used by teachers could be employed to devise more effective methods of teaching children.

Division of the Approach (Programs)

Consonant with the Approach Rationale, the following programs have been designed to (a) incorporate existing knowledge and data concerning assessment, and (b) devise new and better assessment methods and materials.

Program 9.6.1: Critical Reviews of Assessment Instruments and Techniques Now in Use Which Affect the Reading and Communication Skills of Children from Culturally and Linguistically Different Backgrounds.

Program Statement

Investigation in the area will entail the indepth review of all major assessment instruments and techniques now popular which have an effect on the learning process as it relates to reading for children from different cultural and linguistic groups.

Program Potential

Undertaking research of this type offers many advantages. First, there is an existing wealth of information already available. Second, the costs would not be as great as other research projects, because it is a review type of investigation. Third, it would form the basis for the following program of this approach. It is also crucial to the success of the other approaches of this panel.

Program Research Considerations

Although most of the well-known I.Q. and achievement tests have been reviewed, there still remains a large number of other assessment instruments which have to be critically analyzed. The type of review proposed by this program would be one of the less costly, yet one of the most productive and important to this problem area.

Division of the Program (Projects)

Project 9.6.1.1: Assessment of Existing Reading Tests.

Project Statement

All available reading tests widely used in educational institutions will be critically reviewed for appropriateness, usefulness, and effectiveness for children of different cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

Project Potential

This project would afford a basis from which to alter the use of present reading tests. Its benefit would outweigh the cost and would provide a starting point for the development of new and better instruments which are sorely needed.

Project Research Considerations

There is an obvious need to conduct a survey-type analysis regarding this type of testing activity. The need becomes especially evident when we consider educational priorities and funding. If reading scores are used as yardsticks for funding and research, they must be accurate.

Project 9.6.1.2: Assessment of I.Q. and Achievement Tests.

Project Statement

I.Q. and achievement tests used as a means for classifying students from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds will be critically reviewed as to their appropriateness and usefulness.

Project Potential

The implications are that new assessment instruments may have to be developed. Research may indicate that traditional I.Q. and achievement tests should be done away with. It would be very costly.

Project Research Considerations

Previous work done in this area must be critically analyzed before we can use it as grounds for further research.

Project 9.6.1.3: Assessment of "Criterion-Referenced" and Similar Testing Instruments.

Project Statement

"Criterion-referenced" and similar tests or tests based on the same principle will be examined for their effects and usefulness with children from culturally and linguistically different groups.

Project Potential

There is some evidence that the above-mentioned techniques of assessment have been successful with children from different cultural and linguistic groups. Potentially, the research contributions from reviewing such instruments would be substantial indeed. This type of testing may be a viable alternative to present assessment practices, especially so if the panel's view of assessment as it exists today is accurate.

Project Research Considerations

This is necessary research and might serve as a possible alternative approach to assessment research and implementation.

Program 9.6.2: Review and Identification of Existing Instruments, and Development of New Instruments Which Assess Learning Styles, Teaching Styles, Learning Environments, Instructional Materials, and Community Participation.

Program Statement

Research under this program will entail the search for, examination of, and development of assessment instruments and techniques which can be used for assessing the above-outlined areas.

Program Potential

This program offers the foundation for developing assessment instruments and strategies for the teaching of reading and communication skills to children from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds. We cannot overstate the importance of this area. With the ability to assess learning and teaching styles, for example, students can be matched with teachers and vice versa. With the implementation of this program, assessment will be broadened to encompass areas not previously studied.

Program Research Considerations

Although some preliminary investigations have been undertaken which have attempted to assess learning and teaching styles (Ramirez and Castañeda, forthcoming), much more work is necessary, especially in the areas that this program has delineated. The potential contribution to the fields of reading, and teaching in general, are very great.

Division of the Program

Project 9.6.2.1: Review of Existing and Development of New Instruments and/or Techniques Which Assess Learning and Teaching Styles.

Project Statement

The existing literature relating to teaching and learning styles will be reviewed and used as a basis for the development of instruments which will effectively assess these variables. The instruments and/or techniques will then provide further research as to how these different styles affect the learning of reading and communication skills in children from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

Project Potential

Again, the panel is of the opinion that research of this kind is essential if the goals and priorities of the panel are to be met. This type of investigation is critical to the successful analysis of other areas and variables which have been isolated at this conference.

Project Research Considerations

Research in this area has already begun. Some of the initial findings point to the fact that differences in learning and teaching styles may be highly significant factors to consider when looking at all aspects of the educational process, especially as it affects the teaching and learning of reading and communications skills (Cohen, 1974; Ramirez and Castaneda, forthcoming).

Project 9.6.2.2: Review of Existing and Development of New Instruments and/or Techniques Which Effectively Assess Learning Environments.

Project Statement

Some research has focused on learning environments (especially in the traditional classroom sense). Under this project, total learning environments (i.e. home, school, and community) will be studied and assessed for their effects on the acquisition of reading and communication skills of children from culturally and linguistically different backgrounds. The development of relevant criteria for such an investigation will be the object of this project.

Project Potential

The significance of this research is that it is an integral part of the wider approach of this panel. Potentially, it may have less effect on the investigation's ultimate goals but, again, it is an essential part of the entire investigation.

Project Research Considerations

Learning environments comprise perhaps the most difficult of the areas that the panel is to deal with. Nevertheless, the panel has singled out this area as a primary target for research efforts. Although the classification system and taxonomy of "learning environments" may not be quite clear, the panel believes that research is more than appropriate in this area.

Project 9.6.2.3: Review of Existing and Development of New Instruments for Assessing Instructional Materials Used for Teaching Reading and Communication Skills to Children from Different Cultural and Linguistic Backgrounds.

Project Statement

This project will involve the review of existing criteria used by publishers, educational institutions, teachers, and others to assess reading materials for appropriateness, content, technical quality, and overall instructional value for use with children from different cultural and linguistic groups. New criteria will be developed as necessary.

Project Potential

The attractiveness of this research is that material is easily obtainable, and thus costs could be low. The investigation could have a tremendous effect on publishers and educational institutions, especially as a method of imposing high standards of quality on the reading material made available on the market.

Project Research Considerations

We must obtain input from members of the different concerned cultural and linguistic groups as well as from educators and researchers. Criteria developed from this investigation should be as comprehensive as possible in order to have the greatest effect.

Project 9.6.2.4: Review of Existing and Development of New Instruments for Assessing Community Involvement--How It Affects the Teaching of Reading and Communication Skills to Children from Different Cultural and Linguistic Groups.

Project Statement

This project will involve the isolation of community variables, i.e. family, peers, and members of the community at large, and how they affect the reading process of culturally and linguistically different children. The aim of the investigation is to develop some means of assessing these various influences.

Project Potential

The thrust of this type of research is to isolate, comprehend, and replicate findings for the different groups involved. If successful, this investigation could have implications for all the social and behavioral sciences in that it could form a basis for further and more detailed community research.

Project Research Considerations

Of critical importance to this project are the researchers themselves; we must take care to insure that the researchers are aware of the culture, language, and nuances of the group(s) they are dealing with. Proper investigation dictates careful scrutiny of the research and researchers to insure valid results.

Program 9.6.3: Investigation of Testing and Assessment Phenomena.

Program Statement

Investigations have revealed that test and assessment instruments and techniques are affected either positively or negatively by such variables as examiner bias, language bias (or differences in interpretation), test atmosphere, and attitudes of both the person being tested and the examiner. Research in this area will focus on isolating those variables which affect testing and test results, the culturally and linguistically different child, and the process of learning to read and communicate.

Program Potential

Although this program is not of the highest priority, it still is very important. If assessment of children is to continue in the schools, even with new and better instruments, the dynamics of those being tested and those administering tests must be understood. The implications are clear for effective assessment programs.

Program Research Considerations

Factors relating to the other approaches this panel has covered must be considered when undertaking this research. For example, Di Stefano has found that when professors of one cognitive style were asked to rate students in their classes, the students with styles similar to that of the professor were viewed more favorably. Cognitive style, however, is only one of many important factors to include when considering testing phenomena in general.

Project 9.6.3.1: Investigation of Examiner Characteristics.

Project Statement

This project will investigate the characteristics of different examiners in order to obtain data from which we can draw conclusions about examiner characteristics and how these affect performance of children from different cultural and linguistic groups.

Project Potential

The investigation would involve intensive observation and data analysis. However, the potential research contributions argue for this type of research. If the results were significant, they would again argue for different approaches toward assessment.

Project Research Considerations

Research of this nature would involve sampling from several cultural and linguistic groups. Data analysis and design would be extremely crucial.

Project 9.6.3.2: Investigation of the Testing Atmosphere.

Project Statement

The investigation would attempt to identify the social, psychological, and cultural factors which make up the entire test situation. That is, beyond the physical characteristics of a testing situation (i.e. a room, an examiner, and the examined), there are dimensions that make up "test atmosphere." Some of the factors studied would include social distance, warmth of the examiner, and cultural sanction for cooperative and competitive behavior.

Project Potential

Again, this type of investigation would involve detailed observation. The success or "payoff" of such an investigation would not, in all probability, be immediate but, in the long run, it could be extremely beneficial when used with other results of the panel.

Project Research Considerations

Design and methodology would be of critical importance, because there is little previous research in this area.

Project 9.6.3.3: Examination of Student and Parental Attitudes Toward Testing and Assessment.

Project Statement

The investigation would center on gathering information on how parents of culturally and linguistically different children and the students themselves feel about testing and assessment. The research would focus on the subject's attitudes toward the use, misuse, usefulness, and necessity of testing and assessment.

Project Potential

This project should be implemented as soon as possible. The research would be fairly uncomplicated and the results would be immediate. The findings of such an investigation would be critical for planning the approaches education and research would take in the future.

Project Research Considerations

Again, this would be a novel piece of research, especially because the objective would be to gather the views of the culturally and linguistically different. Perhaps the findings could influence the course of further research.

PRIORITIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

General Discussion

The panel found it extremely difficult to assign priorities to the programs because of the danger that a program assigned a lower priority might be considered unimportant as a result. In fact, the panel felt that the need for research to help children from different cultural and linguistic groups is so great that all the programs discussed are vitally important. The programs and projects outlined in the preceding pages are not suggestions for "pure research" designed only to add to our understanding of the world we live in. Instead, they are strategic plans for an attack on the conditions that have left too many children at a disadvantage in the educational system and prevented them from participating fully in the life and prosperity of our society. The ordered listing that follows below should therefore not be taken as an indication that programs assigned a lower priority are not vitally important for this purpose. We have not included any programs we consider other than of extreme importance. Within each grouping below, the programs are listed in numerical order, not in order of priority.

High Priority

9.1.4 Investigation of variables related to hemispheric dominance that affect learning of reading and communication skills in children of different cultural and linguistic groups.

9.3.1 Investigation of the effects of different classroom arrangements in the learning of reading and communication skills.

9.4.2 Investigation of the effects, particularly on the learning of reading and communication skills, of the attitudes and beliefs of the parents as to what the nature of their involvement should be.

9.5.3 Investigation of the effects of instructional material used in the home.

9.6.3 Investigation of testing and assessment phenomena.

Higher Priority

9.1.1 Investigation of special variables which affect learning of reading and communication skills in children of different cultural and linguistic groups.

9.2.2 Investigation of methods of teacher preparation with respect to linguistic variables and cognitive styles.

9.2.3 Investigation of teacher training programs that encourage teachers to consider the sociocultural systems and cognitive styles of children and parent teaching styles which these children have experienced.

9.6.2 Review and identification of existing instruments and development of new instruments which assess learning styles, teaching styles, learning environments, instructional materials, and community participation.

Highest Priority

9.1.2 Investigation of cultural variables that affect learning of reading and communication skills in children of different cultural and linguistic groups.

9.1.3 Investigation of linguistic variables that affect learning of reading and communication skills in children of different cultural and linguistic groups.

9.2.1 Investigation of differences in teaching styles among teachers to determine their relationship to the learning of reading and communication skills in children of different cultural and linguistic groups.

9.4.1 Identification of the effects, particularly on the learning of reading and communication skills, of the attitudes and beliefs of the parents as to what the nature of their involvement should be.

9.4.3 Investigation of the effects of programs which have made use of parents, peers, siblings, tutors, or any other community resource other than regular teachers for the teaching of reading.

9.5.1 Effectiveness of instructional materials with children from different backgrounds.

9.5.2 Investigation of the effects of the cultural content of instructional materials on children from different backgrounds.

9.6.1 Critical reviews of assessment instruments and techniques now in use which affect the reading and communication skills of children from culturally and linguistically different backgrounds.

Criteria

The panel used the following criteria in recommending priorities (not in rank order):

(1) Need for the results to be gained from the research

(2) Probability of obtaining clear results

(3) Availability of research instruments

(4) Investment or return rate

(5) Probability of the results of the research having a direct effect on the school system

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